

HOW TO KEEP THE SABBATH, A SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By G. F. RASSWEILER.

It was a beautiful sunny spring morning, just the kind of a day that called to the hills, or to the auto or to the ball grounds, or to the trout stream, but the boys were out to their New Movement class with an unusually good attendance.

"Well," said Mr. Young, the teacher, "I see you are putting the lesson in practice. In this day of Sabbath desecration, it is refreshing to see a group of live young men bent on putting the day to its best and proper use. I was afraid that this balmy weather would be too much of a temptation to many of you. Trout are biting fine and baseball bats were much in evidence as I was coming to church."

"Yes," said the cynic, "I tried my

best to get Bill and Ben out for a little exercise on the ball field, but I couldn't budge them from their determination to come here. So I had to come myself, just for company's sake."

"Well," said Big Ben, "I know my body needs some fresh air and exercise, but I consider that the day was meant for more than refreshment of body. It was made to refresh my soul as well, and I need that. I will get some fresh air before the day is over."

"That brings us right up to our lesson," said the teacher. Mr. Smith what is one purpose of the Sabbath?"

"Why, for rest."

"Yes, that is relax the body and mind, and quit all unnecessary labor. But would that apply to brain work as well, such as office work, weekly lessons, etc.?"

"Well, I suppose it would," said a high school pupil rather reluctantly.

"But, Mr. Clark," said the teacher, "for what else has the day been given to us?"

"Why, for worship and religious instruction as I understand it, for I read in Exodus that the Lord gave us the day as a sign that He doth sanctify us."

"Yes, and we are commanded to keep it holy."

"Well, but do you think that we

must spend the whole day in going to church and studying the Bible? Didn't Christ say, according to the golden text, that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath?" chimed in the cynic.

"So he did. But he certainly did not say the Sabbath was made for sport. The Sabbath made for man does not make for man's amusement. It means that God made the Sabbath to be a blessing to man not a burden or a curse."

"Why," said Little Bill, "I know a lot of fellows down at the shop who spend the day drinking, gambling, and in lasciviousness, and the day is a curse to them. They would be much better off without a Sabbath at all."

"Yes," replied Mr. Young, "the whole man must be considered. And, therefore, any way of spending the Sabbath which fails to help the soul, is out of keeping with the day. In fact, don't you think that the chief emphasis must be put on spiritual blessings? Wasn't the day given to give the soul a chance, because in the rush of our daily affairs the spiritual part of us is crowded to the wall? Wouldn't it follow then that what diversion we take should be such as will keep us in a Sabbath mood, make us more worshipful, and more sensitive to higher things? And must it not also be such as will be

of a sort that will rest and relax us rather than excite us and put us on the stretch?"

"So, Mr. Sharp, what about noisy sport, or exciting games of baseball, or the shows, or hunting parties, or house parties?"

"Well, I don't think that they are restful in that sense, and certainly they destroy the sense of sanctity and worship for which the day was meant."

"Now, when Christ said that Sabbath was made for man, he departed and went into a synagogue, which shows what He meant by it. Certainly He did not mean to turn the day over to mere sport. His example shows us His ideas of Sabbath observance. Furthermore, we must understand the attitude of the Pharisees which He was combating. They had the idea of the Sabbath for rest and for worship, but not for mercy. They were so anxious to preserve the day for rest and worship that they made it a positive burden. And their rules absolutely disregarded the idea of man's getting any benefit out of the day. To their idea that made no difference. It was the rule and not the man for whom God cared. So they forbade a man from using a gudgeon on the Sabbath unless he swallowed it, as otherwise it would not be eating but working. Even a broken bone or a dislocated

joint was not to be set, nor was an emetic to be given. They had forgotten that God had given the law for man's good. It was against this false idea that Christ set himself and declared the law of helpfulness. It was well, He said, to do good on the Sabbath day, but, by saying that the Sabbath was made for man he did not mean that it was made for us to spend as we pleased, for in the same breath He declared that the Son of Man was Lord of the Sabbath day, and therefore was to be obeyed after His manner and direction. We are swinging from Puritanical severity to Parisian license. We cannot lay down rules but principles. Is any act in keeping with the purpose of the day: relaxation, worship, deeds of mercy? Thus Christ healed the woman bowed down and the man with the dropsy in our lesson."

and could in no wise lift up herself. 12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. 13 And he laid his hands on her; and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. 14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work; in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day. 15 The Lord then answered him and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? 16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day? 17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed; and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him. 1 And it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath day, that they watched him. 2 And, behold, there was a certain

man before him which had the dropsy. 3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? 4 And they held their peace. And he took him and healed him, and let him go. 5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath day? 6 And they could not answer him again to these things. (Copyright, 1901, by Thomas Nelson & Sons.)

WIRELESS TELEPHONY SUCCESS

Augusta, Sicily, March 14.—Tests in wireless telephony made during the past week between warships of the Italian fleet by William Marconi on board the battleship Riena Ellena flagship of the Duke of the Abruzzi were successful. The Duke of the Abruzzi presided over the experiments and expressed his admiration of the results obtained.

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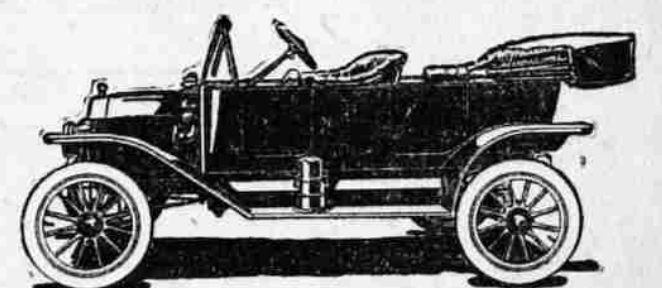


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